

loss by drying, was also a feature of the ham prepared under conditions of competition through which it has won its way to the first place. An examination of any of the stores leads the consumer to regard with suspicion the hams which are exposed to be covered by the dust, to say the least, of the street.

Whatever opinion is arrived at in regard to the proportion of fat and lean that should preferably be in the ham or as to the breeding and rear-

paper and cloth and is bought by weight as packed. It is about four inches wide and sixteen long. Two such pieces only are cut from each side.

SHOULDER CUTS.

Dry Salted Shoulders.—Cut off sides between first and second ribs so as not to expose fore-arm joint. Shank cut off at knee-joint. Neck-bone taken out and neck trimmed smooth. Shoulder butted off square at top.

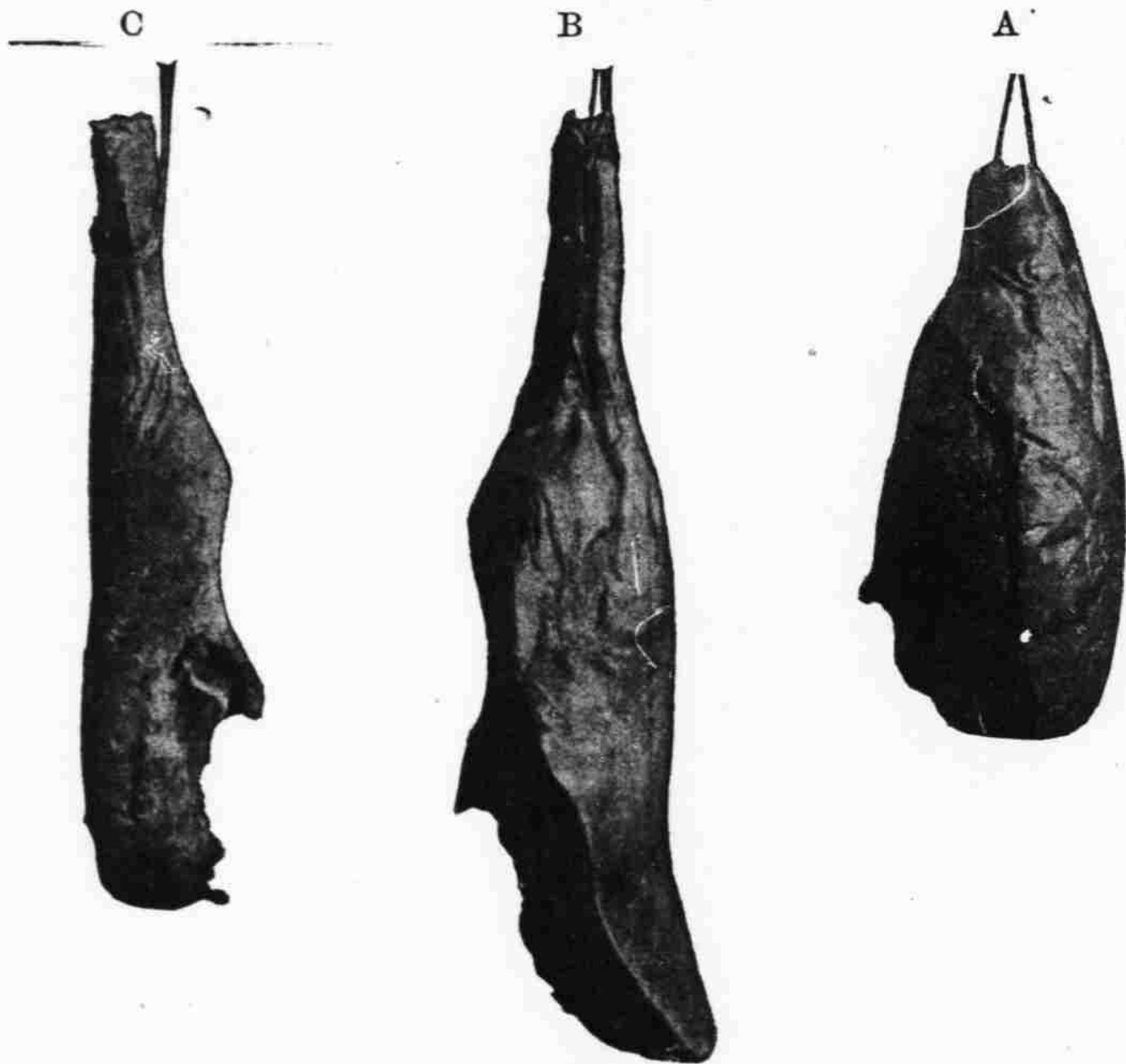


Fig. 3

ing of the hog that yields it, there is no room for doubt that more care in preparation and in marketing is necessary. At present the properly prepared North Carolina ham seems to bring about as much per pound in the local market as the Virginia, which is scarce, or the Western. When hams of the Smithfield type are not properly cut and trimmed there is in addition to the relatively large amount of bone a great waste of tissue to the consumer, which in addition to improper curing makes them unsought for and bring inferior prices when placed upon the market in competition with more shapely and economically cut and properly cured hams.

BREAKFAST BACON.

One important deduction that may be drawn from the desirability of ham and bacon from comparatively lean hogs lies in the relatively large proportion of the muscular tissue to the fatty. The selection of the animals in a not too fat condition for table use may conduce to the superiority of the products.

From the lower part of the side just about where the ribs end is the choicest bacon meat in the whole animal. The accompanying cuts (fig. 4) shows it in the form it is usually put up and in which it commands the highest price. On the flesh side the marks whence the ribs have been removed are faintly visible. In the side view there appears the light and dark shades which indicate the "streak of lean and of fat" that are the signs of the choice bacon. This piece comes wrapped in

Three Rib Shoulders.—Cut off sides between the third and fourth ribs so as to expose the shoulder-blade. Neck-bone taken out and neck trimmed smooth. Shank cut off above knee-joint. The end of shoulder butted off square, so as to show the lean meat, and made as lean as possible.

are made from shoulders; cut off sides between second and third rib. Shank-bone cut off one inch above knee-joint. Neck-bone taken out. Butt taken off through the middle of the blade and nicely rounded to imitate a ham. Generally commands from one-half to one cent per pound above the New York shoulder.

Boneless Hams.—These are made from the lean meat cut off the butts in making picnic hams. This lean meat is cured in sweet pickle the same as sweet pickle ham or picnic ham. After it is cured it is stuffed into skins and wrapped tight with twine and smoked. It is then canvassed and packed. These weigh about three pounds each.

RECEIPIES FOR CURING MEAT

To Sugar-Cure Hams and Bacon.—Pack the meat, the hams and bacon, in a barrel (a molasses barrel is best) and cover well with brine made as follows: Of salt enough in four gallons of water to make a brine that will bear up an egg, add four ounces of pulverized saltpetre, two ounces of soda and four pounds of sugar. Put some weights on the meat to hold it well under the brine. Handle the pieces over on the fifth, fifteenth and thirtieth days, so as to change the position of the meat. Leave in the brine from four to eight weeks; preferably the longer time. Short, thick hams with thin skin will cure the best.

Another: Use a brine strong enough to float a potato, and after the meat is cut and trimmed it is dropped into this brine for two or three days to draw out the blood. It is then taken out and a fresh brine is made, or the old brine boiled and skimmed. To the brine we then add one ounce of saltpetre and a pint of black molasses for each one hundred pounds of meat. The meat is

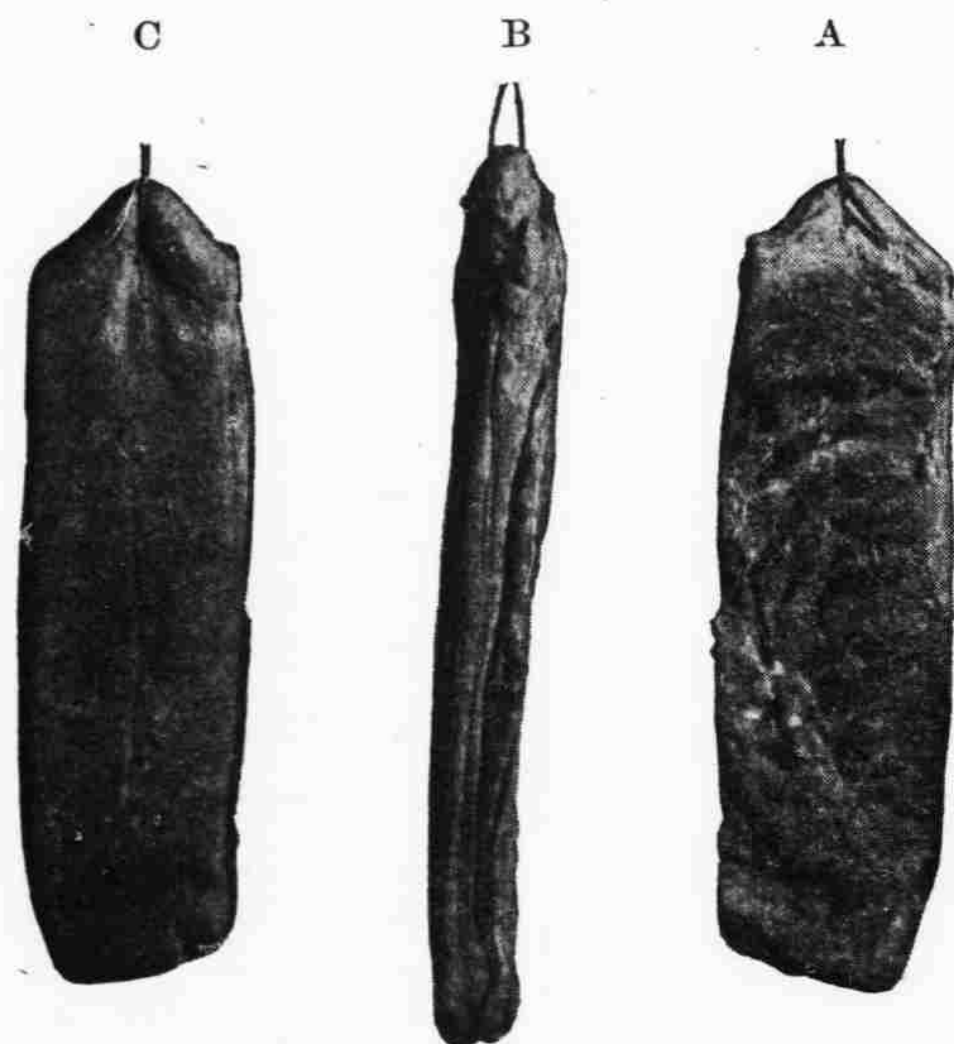


Fig. 4

New York Shoulders.—These are cut from sides between first and second ribs. Shank cut off about one inch above knee-joint. Neck-bone taken out. Neck trimmed up close, and butted up close to blade to make as lean as possible. This is the cut of the shoulder most popular with the American trade.

Picnic or Cottage Hams.—These

then returned to the brine, the thinner parts being put by themselves and the hams and shoulders in another cask. The thin parts remain in the brine three weeks and the hams four or five weeks, care being taken to keep all under the brine. The meat is then taken out and hung in the smoke-house or elsewhere to drip and dry somewhat. It is then slowly

smoked with corn-cobs or hickory woods, the smoke being smothered down with green cedar branches if they are to be had. The smoking is continued for several weeks in favorable cloudy weather, until all are well smoked. The hams should have the upper part of the smoke-house, where the smoke hangs longest.

Dry Salt Cure.—In curing great importance is placed upon the handling of pieces according to their size. Large pieces need more direct attention than the small. It is advised that in preparing smoked meats that the meats be taken from the salt as soon as the cure is perfected, for any longer delay is thought to still further change the tissues and toughen them.

Close attention, too, has to be paid to the state of the weather, for in a warm spell decomposition may set up in very large pieces if not properly attended to. Perfect meat can only be made by utmost care in each detail.

In curing hams use a large wooden tray for the salting. A wide bench, or, as many use, a platform of planks, fully answers every purpose. On this the hams are sprinkled on the flesh surface with powdered saltpetre until it looks moderately frosted. Use about one-half pounds of saltpetre to two hundred pounds of ham. Next, thoroughly cover with fine salt, rubbing it in on all sides. Then pack the hams in bulk in a convenient place, but not in piles more than three feet high. Leave there, in ordinary weather, for three days.

At the expiration of the first stage of salting break bulk, and resalt with fine salt. Pack them in bulk again and leave them there, each as many days as there is pounds in it. Thus a ten-pound ham should remain ten days, and so on. If the hams are assorted while piling, placing the lighter ones on top, this can be done without breaking bulk again.

At the end of the salting process the hams are washed with tepid water until they are thoroughly cleaned, and after partially drying, rub the entire surface with finely ground black pepper. Then hang in the smoke-house. The smoking should be very gradual and slow, continuing from thirty to forty days. Most packers use green hickory or red oak chips to make the smoke. When the smoking is finished the hams should be re-peppered to prevent vermin, and bagged. These hams improve with age and are esteemed perfect at the end of a year.

It is announced in the newspapers that Col. E. J. Parrish, of Durham, who several years ago was sent to Japan as the agent of the American Tobacco Company, has sailed for home, and it is stated that "since the government of Japan has grabbed the tobacco trade of that country there was no further need for him in the Orient." It is gratifying to know that there is one government on the face of the earth that can withstand the tobacco trust. "Grabbed" is good. The tobacco trust has been doing all the grabbing heretofore and it is doubtless very much aggrieved when it finds itself defeated at its own game. Glory to the little Japs! Here's wishing them well in the tobacco trade and in their fight with Russia.—Statesville Landmark.